

2008-Eckhart Tolle Oprah A New Earth Audiobook Podcast Chapter03

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 46:02)

CHAPTER THREE THE CORE OF EGO Most people are so completely identified with the voice in the head, the incessant stream of involuntary and compulsive thinking and the emotions that accompany it, that we may describe them as being possessed by their mind. As long as you are completely unaware of this, you take the thinker to be who you are. This is the egoic mind.

We call it egoic because there is a sense of self, of I, ego, in every thought, every memory, every interpretation, opinion, viewpoint, reaction, emotion. This is unconsciousness, spiritually speaking. Your thinking, the content of your mind, is of course conditioned by the past, your upbringing, culture, family background, and so on.

The central core of all your mind activity consists of certain repetitive and persistent thoughts, emotions and reactive patterns that you identify with most strongly. This entity is the ego itself. In most cases, when you say I, it is the ego speaking, not you, as we have seen.

It consists of thought and emotion, of a bundle of memories you identify with as me and my story, of habitual roles you play without knowing it, of collective identifications such as nationality, religion, race, social class, or political allegiance. It also contains personal identifications, not only with possessions, but also with opinions, external appearance, long-standing resentments, or concepts of yourself as better than or not as good as others, as a success or failure. The content of the ego varies from person to person, but in every ego the same structure operates.

In other words, egos only differ on the surface. Deep down they are all the same. In what way are they the same?

They live on identification and separation. When you live through the mind-made self comprised of thought and emotion that is the ego, the basis for your identity is precarious because thought and emotion are by their very nature ephemeral, fleeting. So every ego is continuously struggling for survival, trying to protect and enlarge itself.

To uphold the I-thought it needs the opposite thought of the other. The conceptual I cannot survive without the conceptual other. The others are most other when I see them as my enemies.

At one end of the scale of this unconscious egoic pattern lies the egoic compulsive habit of fault-finding and complaining about others. Jesus referred to it when he said, Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your

own eye? At the other end of the scale there is physical violence between individuals and warfare between nations.

In the Bible Jesus' question remains unanswered, but the answer is, of course, because when I criticize or condemn another it makes me feel bigger, superior. Complaining and Resentment Complaining is one of the ego's strategies for strengthening itself. Every complaint is a little story the mind makes up that you completely believe in.

Whether you complain aloud or only in thought makes no difference. Some egos that perhaps don't have much else to identify with easily survive on complaining alone. When you are in the grip of such an ego, complaining, especially about other people, is habitual and, of course, unconscious, which means you don't know what you are doing.

Applying negative mental labels to people either to their face or, more commonly, when you speak about them to others, or even just think about them, is often part of this pattern. Name-calling is the crudest form of such labeling and of the ego's need to be right and triumph over others. Jerk, bastard, bitch, all definitive pronouncements that you can't argue with.

On the next level down on the scale of unconsciousness you have shouting and screaming, and not much below that, physical violence. Resentment is the emotion that goes with complaining and the mental labeling of people and adds even more energy to the ego. Resentment means to feel bitter, indignant, aggrieved or offended.

You resent other people's greed, their dishonesty, their lack of integrity, what they are doing, what they did in the past, what they said, what they failed to do, what they should or shouldn't have done. The ego loves it. Instead of overlooking unconsciousness in others, you make it into their identity.

Who is doing that? The unconsciousness in you, the ego. Sometimes the fault that you perceive in another isn't even there.

It is a total misinterpretation, a projection by a mind conditioned to see enemies and to make itself right or superior. At other times the fault may be there, but by focusing on it, sometimes to the exclusion of everything else, you amplify it. And what do you react to in another?

You strengthen in yourself. Reaction to the ego in others is one of the most effective ways not only of going beyond ego in yourself, but also of dissolving the collective human ego. But you can only be in a state of non-reaction if you can recognize someone's behavior as coming from the ego, as being an expression of the collective human dysfunction.

When you realize it's not personal, there's no longer a compulsion to react as if it were. By not reacting to the ego, you will often be able to bring out the sanity in others, which

is the unconditioned consciousness as opposed to the conditioned. At times you may have to take practical steps to protect yourself from deeply unconscious people.

This you can do without making them into enemies. Your greatest protection, however, is being conscious. Somebody becomes an enemy if you personalize the unconsciousness that is the ego.

Non-reaction is not weakness but strength. Another word for non-reaction is forgiveness. To forgive is to overlook or rather to look through.

You look through the ego to the sanity that is in every human being as his or her essence. The ego loves to complain and feel resentful not only about other people but also about situations. What you can do to a person, you can also do to a situation.

Make it into an enemy. The implication is always, this should not be happening. I don't want to be here.

I don't want to be doing this. I'm being treated unfairly. And the ego's greatest enemy of all is, of course, the present moment, which is to say, life itself.

Complaining is not to be confused with informing someone of a mistake or deficiency so that it can be put right. And to refrain from complaining doesn't necessarily mean putting up with bad quality or behavior. There's no ego in telling the waiter that your soup is cold and needs to be heated up, if you stick to the facts, which are always neutral.

How dare you serve me cold soup? That's complaining. There's a me here that loves to feel personally offended by the cold soup and is going to make the most of it, a me that enjoys making someone wrong.

The complaining we are talking about is in the service of the ego, not of change. Sometimes it becomes obvious that the ego doesn't really want change so that it can go on complaining. See if you can catch, that is to say notice, the voice in the head, perhaps in the very moment it complains about something, and recognize it for what it is, the voice of the ego, no more than a conditioned mind-pattern, a thought.

Whenever you notice that voice, you will also realize that you are not the voice, but the one who is aware of it. In fact, you are the awareness that is aware of the voice. In the background there's the awareness, in the foreground there's the voice, the thinker.

In this way you are becoming free of the ego, free of the unobserved mind. The moment you become aware of the ego in you, it is strictly speaking no longer the ego, but just an old conditioned mind-pattern. Ego implies unawareness.

Awareness and ego cannot coexist. The old mind-pattern or mental habit may still

survive and reoccur for a while because it has the momentum of thousands of years of collective human unconsciousness behind it, but every time it is recognized, it is weakened. Reactivity and Grievances Whereas resentment is often the emotion that goes with complaining, it may also be accompanied by a stronger emotion such as anger or some other form of upset.

In this way, it becomes more highly charged energetically. Complaining then turns into reactivity, another of the ego's ways of strengthening itself. There are many people who are always waiting for the next thing to react against, to feel annoyed or disturbed about, and it never takes long before they find it.

This is an outrage, they say. How dare you? I resent this.

They are addicted to upset and anger as others are to a drug. Through reacting against this or that they assert and strengthen their feeling of self. A long-standing resentment is called a grievance.

To carry a grievance is to be in a permanent state of against, and that is why grievances constitute a significant part of many people's ego. Collective grievances can survive for centuries in the psyche of a nation or tribe and fuel a never-ending cycle of violence. A grievance is a strong negative emotion connected to an event in the sometimes distant past that is being kept alive by compulsive thinking, by retelling the story in the head or out loud of what someone did to me or what someone did to us.

A grievance will also contaminate other areas of your life. For example, while you think about and feel your grievance, its negative emotional energy can distort your perception of an event that is happening in the present or influence the way in which you speak or behave towards someone in the present. One strong grievance is enough to contaminate large areas of your life and keep you in the grip of the ego.

Whether you still harbor grievances, whether there is someone in your life you have not completely forgiven, an enemy. If you do, become aware of the grievance both on the level of thought as well as emotion, that is to say, be aware of the thoughts that keep it alive and feel the emotion that is the body's response to those thoughts. Don't try to let go of the grievance.

Trying to let go, to forgive, does not work. Forgiveness happens naturally when you see that it has no purpose other than to strengthen a false sense of self, to keep the ego in place. The seeing is freeing.

Jesus' teaching to forgive your enemies is essentially about the undoing of one of the main egoic structures in the human mind. The past has no power to stop you from being present now. Only your grievance about the past can do that.

And what is a grievance? The baggage of old thought and emotion. Being right, making

wrong.

Complaining as well as fault-finding and reactivity strengthen the ego's sense of boundary and separateness on which its survival depends. But they also strengthen the ego in another way by giving it a feeling of superiority on which it thrives. It may not be immediately apparent how complaining, say, about a traffic jam, about politicians, about the greedy wealthy or the lazy unemployed, or your colleagues or ex-spouse, men or women, can give you a sense of superiority.

Here's why. When you complain, by implication you are right, and the person or situation you complain about or react against is wrong. There's nothing that strengthens the ego more than being right.

Being right is identification with a mental position, a perspective, an opinion, a judgment, a story. For you to be right, of course, you need someone else to be wrong. And so the ego loves to make wrong in order to be right.

In other words, you need to make others wrong in order to get a stronger sense of who you are. Not only a person, but also a situation can be made wrong through complaining and reactivity, which always implies that this should not be happening. Being right places you in a position of imagined moral superiority in relation to the person or situation that is being judged and found wanting.

It is that sense of superiority the ego craves and through which it enhances itself. In defense of an illusion. Facts undoubtedly exist.

If you say, light travels faster than sound, and someone else says the opposite is the case, you are obviously right and he is wrong. The simple observation that lightning precedes thunder could confirm this. So not only are you right, but you know you are right.

Is there any ego involved in this? Possibly, but not necessarily. If you are simply stating what you know to be true, the ego is not involved at all, because there is no identification.

Identification with what? With mind and a mental position. Such identification, however, can easily creep in.

If you find yourself saying, believe me, I know, or why do you never believe me? Then the ego has already crept in. It is hiding in the little word, me.

A simple statement, light is faster than sound, although true, is now in the service of illusion, of ego. It has become contaminated with a false sense of I. It has become personalized, turned into a mental position.

The I feels diminished or offended because somebody doesn't believe what I said. Ego takes everything personally. Emotion arises, defensiveness, perhaps even aggression.

Are you defending the truth? No. The truth, in any case, needs no defense.

The light or sound does not care about what you or anybody else thinks. You are defending yourself, or rather the illusion of yourself, the mind-made substitute. It would be even more accurate to say that the illusion is defending itself.

If even the simple and straightforward realm of facts can lend itself to egoic distortion and illusion, how much more so the less tangible realm of opinions, viewpoints and judgments, all of them thought-forms that can easily become infused with a sense of I. Every ego confuses opinions and viewpoints with facts. Furthermore, it cannot tell the difference between an event and its reaction to that event.

Every ego is a master of selective perception and distorted interpretation. Only through awareness, not through thinking, can you differentiate between fact and opinion. Only through awareness are you able to see, there's the situation and here's the anger I feel about it, and then realize there are other ways of approaching the situation, other ways of seeing it and dealing with it.

Only through awareness can you see the totality of the situation or person, instead of adopting one limited perspective. If or Absolute Beyond the realm of simple and verifiable facts, the certainty that I am right and you are wrong is a dangerous thing in personal relationships as well as in interactions between nations, tribes, religions and so on. But if the belief, I am right, you are wrong, is one of the ways in which the ego strengthens itself, if making yourself right and others wrong is a mental dysfunction that perpetuates separation and conflict between human beings, does that mean there's no such thing as right or wrong behavior, action or belief?

And wouldn't that be the moral relativism that some contemporary Christian teachings see as the great evil of our times? The history of Christianity is of course a prime example of how the belief that you are in sole possession of the truth, that is to say right, can corrupt your actions and behavior to the point of insanity. For centuries, torturing and burning people alive if their opinion diverged even in the slightest from church doctrine or narrow interpretations of scripture, the truth, was considered right because the victims were wrong.

They were so wrong that they needed to be killed. The truth was considered more important than human life. And what was the truth?

A story you had to believe in, which means a bundle of thoughts. The one million people that mad dictator Pol Pot of Cambodia ordered killed included everybody who wore glasses. Why?

To him, the Marxist interpretation of history was the absolute truth. And according to his version of it, those who wore glasses belonged to the educated class, the bourgeoisie, the exploiters of the peasants. They needed to be eliminated to make room for a new social order.

His truth also was a bundle of thoughts. The Catholic and other churches are actually correct when they identify relativism, the belief that there is no absolute truth to guide human behavior, as one of the evils of our times. But you won't find absolute truth if you look for it where it cannot be found—in doctrines, ideologies, sets of rules, or stories.

What do all of these have in common? They are made up of thought. Thought can at best point to the truth, but it never is the truth.

That's why Buddhists say, The finger pointing to the moon is not the moon. All religions are equally false and equally true, depending on how you use them. You can use them in the service of the ego, or you can use them in the service of the truth.

If you believe only your religion is the truth, you are using it in the service of the ego. Used in such a way, religion becomes ideology and creates an illusory sense of superiority as well as division and conflict between people. In the service of the truth, religious teachings represent signposts or maps left behind by awakened humans to assist you in spiritual awakening—that is to say, in becoming free of identification with form.

There is only one absolute truth, and all other truths emanate from it. When you find that truth, your actions will be in alignment with it. Human action can reflect the truth, or it can reflect illusion.

Can the truth be put into words? Yes, but the words are of course not it. They only point to it.

The truth is inseparable from who you are. Yes, you are the truth. If you look for it elsewhere, you will be deceived every time.

The very being that you are is truth. Jesus tried to convey that when he said, I am the way and the truth and the life. These words uttered by Jesus are one of the most powerful and direct pointers to the truth, if understood correctly. If misinterpreted, however, they become a great obstacle.

Jesus speaks of the innermost I am, the essence identity of every man and woman, every life-form, in fact. He speaks of the life that you are. Some Christian mystics have called it the Christ within.

Buddhists call it your Buddha nature. For Hindus it is Atman, the indwelling God. When you are in touch with that dimension within yourself, and being in touch with it is your

natural state, not some miraculous achievement, all your actions and relationships will reflect the oneness with all life that you sense deep within.

This is love. Laws, commandments, rules and regulations are necessary for those who are cut off from who they are, the truth within. They prevent the worst excesses of the ego, and often they don't even do that.

“Love and do what you will,” said St. Augustine. Words cannot get much closer to the truth than that. On a collective level, the mindset “We are right and they are wrong” is particularly deeply entrenched in those parts of the world where conflict between two nations, races, tribes, religions or ideologies is long-standing, extreme and endemic.

Both sides of the conflict are equally identified with their own perspective, their own story, that is to say, identified with thought. Both are equally incapable of seeing that another perspective, another story, may exist and also be valid. Israeli writer Halevi speaks of the possibility of accommodating a competing narrative, but in many parts of the world people are not yet able or willing to do that.

Both sides believe themselves to be in possession of the truth. Both regard themselves as victims and the other as evil. And because they have conceptualized and thereby dehumanized the other as the enemy, they can kill and inflict all kinds of violence on the other, even on children, without feeling their humanity and suffering.

They become trapped in an insane spiral of perpetration and retribution, action and reaction. Here it becomes obvious that the human ego in its collective aspect as “us against them” is even more insane than the “me”, the individual ego, although the mechanism is the same. By far the greater part of violence that humans have inflicted on each other is not the work of criminals or the mentally deranged, but of normal respectable citizens in the service of the collective ego.

One can go so far as to say that on this planet “normal” equals “insane”. What is it that lies at the root of this insanity? Complete identification with thought and emotion, that is to say, ego.

Greed, selfishness, exploitation, cruelty and violence are still all-pervasive on this planet. When you don't recognize them as individual and collective manifestations of an underlying dysfunction or mental illness, you fall into the error of personalizing them. You construct a conceptual identity for an individual or group and you say, “This is who he is.

This is who they are.” When you confuse the ego that you perceive in others with their identity, it is the work of your own ego that uses this misperception to strengthen itself through being right and therefore superior, and through reacting with condemnation, indignation and often anger against the perceived enemy. All this is enormously

satisfying to the ego. It strengthens the sense of separation between yourself and the other, whose "otherness" has become magnified to such an extent that you can no longer feel your common humanity, nor the rootedness in the one life that you share with each human being, your common divinity.

The particular egoic patterns that you react to most strongly in others and misperceive as their identity tend to be the same patterns that are also in you, but that you are unable or unwilling to detect within yourself. In that sense, you have much to learn from your enemies. What is it in them that you find most upsetting, most disturbing?

Their selfishness, their greed, their need for power and control, their insincerity, dishonesty, propensity to violence, or whatever it may be. Anything that you resent and strongly react to in another is also in you. But it is no more than a form of ego, and as such it is completely impersonal.

It has nothing to do with who that person is, nor has it anything to do with who you are. Only if you mistake it for who you are can observing it within you be threatening to your sense of self. War is a mindset.

In certain cases you may need to protect yourself or someone else from being harmed by another, but beware of making it your mission to eradicate evil, as you are likely to turn into the very thing you are fighting against. Fighting unconsciousness will draw you into unconsciousness yourself. Unconsciousness, dysfunctional egoic behavior, can never be defeated by attacking it.

Even if you defeat your opponent, the unconsciousness will simply have moved into you, or the opponent reappears in a new disguise. Whatever you fight you strengthen, and what you resist persists. These days you frequently hear the expression, "The war against this or that," and whenever I hear it I know that it is condemned to failure.

There is the war against drugs, the war against crime, the war against terrorism, the war against cancer, the war against poverty, and so on. For example, despite the war against crime and drugs there has been a dramatic increase in crime and drug-related offenses in the past twenty-five years. The prison population of the United States has gone up from just under 300,000 in 1980 to a staggering 2.1 million in 2004. The war against disease has given us, amongst other things, antibiotics. At first they were spectacularly successful, seemingly enabling us to win the war against infectious diseases. Now many experts agree that the widespread and indiscriminate use of antibiotics has created a time bomb, and that antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria, so-called superbugs, will in all likelihood bring about a re-emergence of those diseases and possibly epidemics.

Medical Treatment is the third leading cause of death after heart disease and cancer. Homeopathy and Chinese medicine are two examples of possible alternative approaches to disease that do not treat the illness as an enemy, and therefore do not create new

diseases. War is a mindset, and all action that comes out of such a mindset will either strengthen the enemy, the perceived evil, or, if the war is won, will create a new enemy, a new evil equal to and often worse than the one that was defeated.

There is a deep interrelatedness between your state of consciousness and external reality. When you are in the grip of a mindset such as war, your perceptions become extremely selective as well as distorted. In other words, you will see only what you want to see and then misinterpret it.

You can imagine what kind of action comes out of such a delusional system, or, instead of imagining it, watch the news on TV tonight. Recognize the ego for what it is, a collective dysfunction, the insanity of the human mind. When you recognize it for what it is, you no longer misperceive it as somebody's identity.

Once you see the ego for what it is, it becomes much easier to remain non-reactive towards it. You don't take it personally any more. There is no complaining, blaming, accusing, or making wrong.

Nobody is wrong. It is the ego in someone, that's all. Compassion arises when you recognize that all are suffering from the same sickness of the mind, some more acutely than others.

You do not fuel the drama any more that is part of all egoic relationships. What is its fuel? Reactivity.

The ego thrives on it. Do you want peace or drama? You want peace.

There is no one who does not want peace. Yet there is something else in you that wants the drama, wants the conflict. You may not be able to feel it at this moment.

You may have to wait for a situation or even just a thought that triggers a reaction in you. Someone accusing you of this or that, not acknowledging you, encroaching on your territory, questioning the way you do things, an argument about money. Can you then feel the enormous surge of force moving through you, the fear perhaps being masked by anger or hostility?

Can you hear your own voice becoming harsh or shrill, or louder and a few octaves lower? Can you be aware of your mind racing to defend its position, justify, attack, blame? In other words, can you awaken at that moment of unconsciousness?

Can you feel that there is something in you that is at war, something that feels threatened and wants to survive at all cost, that needs the drama in order to assert its identity as the victorious character within that theatrical production? Can you feel there is something in you that would rather be right than at peace, beyond ego, your true identity? When the ego is at war, know that it is no more than an illusion that is fighting

to survive.

That illusion thinks it is you. It is not easy at first to be there as the witnessing presence, especially when the ego is in survival mode or some emotional pattern from the past has become activated. But once you have had a taste of it, you will grow in presence power, and the ego will lose its grip on you.

And so a power comes into your life that is far greater than the ego, greater than the mind. All that is required to become free of the ego is to be aware of it, since awareness and ego are incompatible. Awareness is the power that is concealed within the present moment.

This is why we may also call it presence. The ultimate purpose of human existence, which is to say your purpose, is to bring that power into this world. And this is also why becoming free of the ego cannot be made into a goal to be attained at some point in the future.

Only presence can free you of the ego, and you can only be present now, not yesterday or tomorrow. Only presence can undo the past in you and thus transform your state of consciousness. The belief that you are spirit?

No, that's a thought. A little closer to the truth than the thought that believes you are who your birth certificate says you are, but still a thought. Spiritual realization is to see clearly that what I perceive, experience, think or feel is ultimately not who I am, that I cannot find myself in all those things that continuously pass away.

The Buddha was probably the first human being to see this clearly. And so anatta, no self, became one of the central points of his teaching. And when Jesus said, deny thyself, what he meant was, negate and thus undo the illusion of self.

If the self, the ego, were truly who I am, it would be absurd to deny it. What remains is the light of consciousness in which perceptions, experiences, thoughts and feelings come and go. That is being.

That is the deeper, true I. When I know myself as that, whatever happens in my life is no longer of absolute but only of relative importance. I honor it, but it loses its absolute seriousness, its heaviness.

The only thing that ultimately matters is this. Can I sense my essential beingness, the I am, in the background of my life at all times? To be more accurate, can I sense the I am that I am at this moment?

Can I sense my essential identity as consciousness itself? Or am I losing myself in what happens, losing myself in the mind, in the world? All structures are unstable.

Whatever form it takes, the unconscious drive behind ego is to strengthen the image of who I think I am, the phantom self that came into existence when thought, a great blessing as well as a great curse, began to take over and obscured the simple yet profound joy of connectedness with Being, the Source, God. Whatever behavior the ego manifests, the hidden motivating force is always the same, the need to stand out, be special, be in control, the need for power, for attention, for more. And, of course, the need to feel a sense of separation, that is to say, the need for opposition, enemies.

The ego always wants something from other people or situations. There is always a hidden agenda, always a sense of not enough yet, of insufficiency and lack that needs to be filled. It uses people and situations to get what it wants, and even when it succeeds, it is never satisfied for long.

Often it is thwarted in its aims, and for the most part the gap between I want and what is becomes a constant source of upset and anguish. The famous and now classic pop song, I can't get no satisfaction, is the song of the ego. The underlying emotion that governs all the activity of the ego is fear, the fear of being nobody, the fear of nonexistence, the fear of death.

All its activities are ultimately designed to eliminate this fear, but the most the ego can ever do is to cover it up temporarily with an intimate relationship, a new possession, or winning at this or that. Illusion will never satisfy you. Only the truth of who you are, if realized, will set you free.

Why fear? Because the ego arises by identification with form, and deep down it knows that no forms are permanent, that they are all fleeting. So there is always a sense of insecurity around the ego, even if on the outside it appears confident.

As I was walking with a friend through a beautiful nature reserve near Malibu in California, we came upon the ruins of what had been once a country house, destroyed by fire several decades ago. As we approached the property, long overgrown with trees and all kinds of magnificent plants, there was a sign by the side of the trail put there by the park authorities. It read, "Danger, all structures are unstable." I said to my friend, "That's a profound sutra, sacred scripture." And we stood there in awe. Once you realize and accept that all structures, all forms, are unstable, even the seemingly solid material ones, peace arises within you. This is because the recognition of the impermanence of all forms awakens you to the dimension of the formless within yourself, that which is beyond death. Jesus called it "eternal life." There are many subtle but easily overlooked forms of ego that you may observe in other people and, more important, in yourself. Remember, the moment you become aware of the ego in yourself, that emerging awareness is who you are beyond ego, the deeper "I." The recognition of the false is already the arising of the real. For example, you are about to tell someone the news of what happened. Guess what?

You don't know yet? Let me tell you. If you are alert enough, present enough, you may be able to detect a momentary sense of satisfaction within yourself just before imparting the news, even if it is bad news.

It is due to the fact that for a brief moment there is, in the eyes of the ego, an imbalance in your favor between you and the other person. For that brief moment you know more than the other. The satisfaction that you feel is of the ego and it is derived from feeling a stronger sense of self relative to the other person.

Even if he or she is the president or the pope, you feel superior in that moment because you know more. Many people are addicted to gossiping partly for this reason. In addition, gossiping often carries an element of malicious criticism and judgment of others, and so it also strengthens the ego through the implied but imagined moral superiority that is there whenever you apply a negative judgment to anyone.

If someone has more, knows more, or can do more than I, the ego feels threatened because the feeling of I-ness diminishes its imagined sense of self relative to the other. It may then try to restore itself by somehow diminishing, criticizing or belittling the value of the other person's possessions, knowledge or abilities. Or the ego may shift its strategy, and instead of competing with the other person it will enhance itself by association with that person if he or she is important in the eyes of others.

Ego and Fame The well-known phenomenon of name-dropping, the casual mention of who you know, is part of the ego's strategy of gaining a superior identity in the eyes of others and therefore in its own eyes, through association with someone, important. The bane of being famous in this world is that who you are becomes totally obscured by a collective mental image. Most people you meet want to enhance their identity, the mental image of who they are, through association with you.

They themselves may not know that they are not interested in you at all, but only in strengthening their ultimately fictitious sense of self. They believe that through you they can be more. They are looking to complete themselves through you, or rather through the mental image they have of you as a famous person, a larger-than-life collective conceptual identity.

The absurd overvaluation of fame is just one of the many manifestations of egoic madness in our world. Some famous people fall into the same error and identify with the collective fiction, the image people and the media have created of them, and they begin to actually see themselves as superior to ordinary mortals. As a result, they become more and more alienated from themselves and others, more and more unhappy, more and more dependent on their continuing popularity.

Surrounded only by people who feed their inflated self-image, they become incapable of genuine relationships. Albert Einstein, who was admired as almost superhuman and

whose fate it was to become one of the most famous people on the planet, never identified with the image the collective mind had created of him. He remained humble, egoless.

In fact, he spoke of a grotesque contradiction between what people consider to be my achievements and abilities and the reality of who I am and what I am capable of. This is why it is hard for a famous person to be in genuine relationship with others. A genuine relationship is one that is not dominated by the ego with its image-making and self-seeking.

In a genuine relationship, there is an outward flow of open, alert attention towards the other person, in which there is no wanting whatsoever. That alert attention is presence. It is the prerequisite for any authentic relationship.

The ego always either wants something, or if it believes there is nothing to get from the other, it is in a state of utter indifference. It doesn't care about you. And so, the three predominant states of egoic relationships are wanting, thwarted wanting, anger, resentment, blaming, complaining, and indifference.

[Speaker 2] (46:07 - 47:28)

Hello again, everyone. Welcome to week number three of our New Earth web class. And again, I thank you.

Eckhart Tolle thanks you for joining us as we bring students and seekers together to discuss our latest book club selection, Eckhart Tolle's A New Earth. I'm happy once again to see that we've been connecting with readers around the world. We've gotten questions and comments just this week from as far away as Rotterdam, Rio, Beirut, Casablanca, Greece, Seoul, and even Tasmania.

Hello, Tasmania. Thank you for all of your really so, so thoughtful your emails have been. And I can tell you, we love hearing from you wherever you are.

There have been either two million of you who've watched our classes live, or on streams, or downloads. No matter how you're watching, I welcome you to the awakening, the shift in consciousness that's happening really all over the planet. So, I want to get started on chapter three.

As you see on your screen, you can type in your questions and send them to us instantly throughout the class. We're going to be speaking with students via Skype. You know, Skype is that free software that allows you to make internet and video phone calls from all over the world.

Welcome again.

[Speaker 1] (47:28 - 47:29)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (47:29 - 47:29)

Did you have a good week?

[Speaker 1] (47:30 - 47:30)

Very good.

[Speaker 2] (47:30 - 47:50)

Very good. So, if we were to summarize, last week we were talking about how the current state of humanity is that we are humans here living on the planet Earth, have an ego, and learning to manage that ego is what this book is all about.

[Speaker 1] (47:50 - 48:25)

Yes, and going beyond ego at the same time means going beyond what the Buddha described as the normal human condition, which is one of suffering, because ultimately the ego, sooner or later, usually sooner, always produces some form of suffering. So, it's really transcending the ego, going beyond the ego, at the same time means going beyond this unconscious urge to generate more and more suffering, both in people's personal lives as well as collectively.

[Speaker 2] (48:25 - 48:39)

We did something last week that was unprecedented. You said it's never been done before on television where you just sit there in silence. And I thought a lot of people responded to the sense of connection from that.

So, you want to do that again?

[Speaker 1] (48:39 - 48:39)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (48:39 - 48:40)

Let's do that again.

[Speaker 1] (48:40 - 49:35)

Yes, yes. So, you're going to lead us in silence. Okay, I'll just maybe one or two little hints about what to do with your mind when you go into silence, because not speaking isn't complete silence yet, because usually, even though you're not speaking, the mind is

still active and producing noise.

So, how to stop the mind from producing noise or how to reduce the amount of noise that the mind produces is quite easy. You take your attention away from the mind, from thinking, and we did that already last week, and simply become aware that you are breathing. The air flows in and out and you feel yourself breathing.

Air flows in and out of the body. And so, as we go into silence now for a few seconds, just direct your attention and feel your own breath.

[Speaker 2] (49:35 - 50:33)

That was nice. Yes. Today's lesson, chapter three, beginning on page 59.

I love the idea that we're all literally on the same page. Everybody, page 59, the core of the ego. Most people are so completely identified with the voice in the head, the incessant stream of involuntary and compulsive thinking and the emotions that accompany it, that we may describe them as being possessed by their mind.

My question to you, if we are not that constant stream of thinking, then who are we?

[Speaker 1] (50:35 - 50:44)

Now, that question usually would be answered by the mind, by giving some kind of concept of who we are.

[Speaker 2] (50:46 - 50:59)

Now... Yes, I am female. Is that...

I am African American. I work on TV. Yes.

My mother was, my mother is, I live at, my job is. Yes. That's how most people with you say, who are you?

[Speaker 1] (50:59 - 53:05)

Yes. But beyond that, because concepts refer to who we are temporarily in the world of form. You're a mother, you're a father, you have a certain profession, belong to a certain race, you're a man or a woman, nationality, all these things.

Now, when you ask who are we beyond that, there is no conceptual answer to that. No conceptual answer would be absolutely correct. We can give little hints.

We can say, we are the formless consciousness behind all that. We are that which cannot be defined through concepts or words. So, knowing who you are is not, does not mean that suddenly you have some new idea in your head and say, oh, now let me tell

you who I am.

I've discovered who I am. You get closer to knowing you, who you are, if you come to a stage where you have that feeling, and I mention it in the book somewhere, when people tell me, I don't know who I am anymore, because they have realized who they are not. They are ultimately not their profession, they are not whatever function they fulfill, they are not their nationality, so they're beginning to realize that's not really who I am, but then they enter the unknown and say, well, I'm no longer sure who I am.

And I always congratulate people when they say, I'm not sure who I am anymore. Well, that usually connotes confusion. Confusion, if you still want to know who you are, but if you can become comfortable with not knowing who you are, with not defining yourself, to yourself or to others, mainly to yourself, because the ego is constantly a self-definition, to remind yourself who you are, you remember your story of your past, and so on.

You have opinions about yourself, and so this is the self-definition.

[Speaker 2] (53:06 - 53:12)

But don't we obviously need the ego, Eckhart? Don't we obviously need it? Otherwise, why don't we have it?

Why wouldn't we have evolved past it?

[Speaker 1] (53:13 - 54:18)

We're doing that now. So it's been a stage in the evolution of consciousness, a necessary stage in the evolution of consciousness. For survival.

Yes, yes. Because? The ego arose because we started to think.

So the ability in humans, suddenly humans developed the ability to differentiate and to think. To me, the beginning of the Old Testament really describes the beginning of the ability to think, because what it says in the Old Testament is, "They ate of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil." The ability to say, "This is good, this is bad," to differentiate, starting to think. So the ability to think arose in our species, which was a wonderful thing on the one hand, but over many, many millennia, hundreds of thousands of years, more and more, our original sense of connectedness with life and with being, which the natural world still has, animals still have that.

They live in a state of natural connectedness.

[Speaker 12] (54:18 - 54:21)

And some cultures did. Some of ancient cultures.

[Speaker 6] (54:21 - 54:22)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (54:22 - 55:21)

They still have that. A sense of being rooted, being comfortable in your own skin, being rooted deeply within, and feel that sense of oneness with the totality of life. Oneness with life itself.

And so we had, humanity had that once, and as you say, some ancient cultures, perhaps there are still remnants of ancient cultures, and they still have that. But humans, as they went into more and more thinking and differentiation, they gradually, their sense of self, gradually moved from the center of their being, which I would describe as their heart, or the solar plexus, into their mind. Into their mind.

And they more and more, they began to identify with the movement of thought. And gradually, out of this continuous identification with the movement of thought, a thought-made entity was produced, which is the ego.

[Speaker 2] (55:22 - 55:25)

Yeah. Which is what you're saying is being possessed by our minds.

[Speaker 1] (55:25 - 55:25)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (55:25 - 55:40)

Okay. By being possessed by our minds. Okay, you say this is the egoic mind, and we call it egoic because there's a sense of self, of I, in every thought, every memory, every interpretation, opinion, and so forth.

And this is unconsciousness, spiritually speaking.

[Speaker 1] (55:40 - 56:05)

Yes, because you identify with thought, rather than being, identifying with the, your inner essence, which is what we lost, which is the state of Eden, or paradise, as it's described in the Bible. We lost that, and it's not only in the Bible, there are many ancient cultures where they speak of the golden age that we lost, in many different cultures.

[Speaker 2] (56:05 - 56:37)

And you say egos are all the same on the surface, they only, they differ only on the surface. Deep down, they're all the same. Yes.

Okay. Now, chapter three is all about the core of the ego, what makes it thrive. Yes.

And you say that, that what we react to in another, we strengthen in ourselves. Can you give us an example of that? One of the things the ego needs to survive is reacting against other people.

What you react to in another, you strengthen in yourself, you say.

[Speaker 1] (56:37 - 57:14)

Yes, that's usually what we react to most strongly in others, and what we most strongly condemn in others is usually something that we also have, a trait that we also have, but that we are unconscious of in ourselves. So when we, for example, we become upset if we encounter somebody who is very greedy, or we could become upset about somebody who is dishonest, no matter who, the force of your reaction usually tells you that something in you that you need to look at.

[Speaker 12] (57:14 - 57:18)

Really? All the time? All the time?

[Speaker 1] (57:19 - 57:28)

Well, it's for you to find out or anybody to find out in their own lives. When you react strongly, have it then become alert and have a look inside.

[Speaker 2] (57:28 - 57:38)

Okay. You say complaining is one of the ego's favorite strategies for strengthening itself. Every complaint is a little story the mind makes up that you completely believe in.

[Speaker 1] (57:39 - 58:07)

Yes. Now, that's a very common thing, and perhaps until people begin to become more aware... And some egos survive on complaining.

Some egos who haven't got much else to identify with, they can survive on complaining alone. So then continuously you are condemning other people, you're continuously criticizing, condemning, or judging negatively situations that you're in, your surroundings, other people.

[Speaker 2] (58:07 - 58:12)

So the ego is the identification with those thoughts. It's not necessarily the thought.

[Speaker 1] (58:12 - 58:20)

No. It's the thing that you become those thoughts. There's no space between you and the thought.

Got that.

[Speaker 2] (58:21 - 58:28)

Okay. All right. So, name-calling is also a form that the ego defines itself.

[Speaker 1] (58:28 - 59:27)

Yes. And that, of course, one could say, well, it's relatively harmless. On one level, it's to call a person this or that, to attach a label to a person.

But if you follow this up to see, you can actually see how dreadful it is to label another human being or another group of human beings. Because once you have labeled, you've attached a mental label to another human being, you have desensitized yourself to the aliveness and the humanity of that other human being, because you're relating now to a label. So if you say he's a whatever, maybe he's a communist, he's this, he's that, any label, and immediately, instead of sensing the aliveness of that human being and have some empathy with that, you have cut yourself off and you have a label.

[Speaker 2] (59:27 - 59:42)

In Chapter 4, you talk about that, that role-playing, how we do it in temporary ways. I'm the person who's going to the store, I'm the customer, and there's the clerk. The person who labels himself the clerk, and I'm the customer, there's a certain defined behavior that we have.

[Speaker 1] (59:42 - 59:49)

Yes. And then when it's done collectively, the labeling, when an entire nation labels another nation in a certain way.

[Speaker 2] (59:49 - 59:51)

Or I'm the boss and you're the janitor.

[Speaker 1] (59:51 - 1:00:10)

Or you're my subordinate. Yes. All these are forms of mental labeling.

So any kind of mental label that you're completely identified with desensitizes you to the humanity and then of the other human being. And then all kinds of things are possible, even violence becomes possible.

[Speaker 2] (1:00:10 - 1:00:37)

Okay, I got it. Everybody, I just got this. You got this.

Remember two weeks ago, we were talking about walking under the trees, feeling nature, not labeling the flowers, being able to experience the essence of the flowers. What you're saying here is you're labeling people as he's a jerk or he's a whatever. Once you start doing that, you become desensitized to who they really are in the same way that you were when you were labeling things in nature.

[Speaker 1] (1:00:38 - 1:00:38)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:00:38 - 1:00:43)

Okay. Right, exactly. Okay, we have Bill.

Hello, Bill. Talked to you earlier today.

[Speaker 3] (1:00:43 - 1:00:44)

Oprah, how are you?

[Speaker 2] (1:00:44 - 1:00:50)

Hi. Bill's in Connecticut on Skype. Bill and I Skyped on the Oprah show earlier today.

What's your question to us now?

[Speaker 3] (1:00:51 - 1:01:05)

Well, first of all, Eckhart, I'd like to say that this book is indicative to the quintessential essence of life. This is incredible reading. I have a very simple question.

Do you compare the egoic mind to the subconscious?

[Speaker 1] (1:01:05 - 1:01:20)

I don't use those terms because they're a completely different frame of reference. There is, of course, a lot of subconscious activity in the egoic mind also.

[Speaker 3] (1:01:21 - 1:01:25)

Do they run in conjunction with each other or are they separate?

[Speaker 1] (1:01:25 - 1:02:29)

Essentially, for the ego to survive, for the ego to thrive, you need to be unconscious of it. So the way I see it, I would describe the entire egoic functioning as part of the

unconsciousness. And it's only when you become aware of those patterns that operate in your own mind that you are stepping out of the unconsciousness.

And this is why we call it awakening. And when you suddenly become aware, even of initially, perhaps, of just a tiny pattern in your mind. For example, we talked about complaining.

If you become aware that often during the day you complain uselessly because it serves no purpose about other people or situations. And suddenly say, oh, there's the complaining voice in my head. Not only do you say there's the complaining voice, there is a deeper dimension of consciousness that has suddenly come forth from where you can be aware of that voice.

[Speaker 2] (1:02:29 - 1:02:34)

And what you're saying is you, we are the awareness.

[Speaker 1] (1:02:34 - 1:02:49)

That's right. We are the awareness. This is essentially who you are.

You are not all those things that the awareness can be conscious of. Or the labels or whatever. You are the consciousness or the awareness.

[Speaker 2] (1:02:49 - 1:02:50)

You are the awareness.

[Speaker 1] (1:02:50 - 1:02:52)

And as long as you don't know that.

[Speaker 2] (1:02:52 - 1:02:53)

Isn't that blow your mind, Bill?

[Speaker 3] (1:02:54 - 1:02:58)

I'm like, I'm just, I'm washed away here.

[Speaker 2] (1:02:59 - 1:03:16)

What is so fascinating, I was sharing this with Eckhart as we were preparing for tonight's lesson. That I received an email from you through our message boards where you were talking about how your life was sort of spiraling downhill. You were not communicating with your wife.

You were sort of.

[Speaker 3] (1:03:17 - 1:03:47)

Oprah, I wasn't communicating with anybody. I was just, I was stagnating and I needed a wake up call. And I was, I was, I was on the search.

And when I heard you mention this book, it was the name that stuck a new earth. You know, that's really cool. I really have to check that out.

And it took me five weeks to buy the book. But you know, it's my manual for life. It's just, it's an incredible composition.

It truly is.

[Speaker 2] (1:03:47 - 1:03:59)

So you were saying on the Oprah show earlier today. Many people are joining us this evening who weren't a part of the Oprah show. But you were saying on the Oprah show earlier today when we were Skyping.

That you sat down, you were going to give it a couple of hours and then.

[Speaker 3] (1:04:00 - 1:04:21)

Yeah, yeah. I figured, you know, I'll knock off two or three chapters. I got so consumed in this, in this, this whole wave of, of, of writing.

I was like, wow, I can't put it down. And that, you know, 12 hours later I closed the cover and I went, wow. What an incredible ride.

[Speaker 2] (1:04:21 - 1:04:26)

Okay. And what was the biggest realization? Hey Bill, what was the biggest realization for you?

[Speaker 3] (1:04:26 - 1:05:31)

The biggest realization, you know, the whole book itself was a realization. I didn't have any one chapter or any one paragraph I went through. It really started on chapter three for me.

From chapter three, it went to the next chapter, the chapter after that. How we're brought up, how we live in a dysfunctional life. And Oprah, let me tell you something.

I grew up in one of the most dysfunctional families you'd ever want to know. And this is something that we carry with us. Your pain body.

I've said that, you know, this is a manual for life. We're thrown out there. We're not

given, you know, we get a manual for our cars, our appliances, our electronics, but we're thrown out there.

And, you know, as young adults, it's like, go do your thing. But while we're doing our thing, we're consumed in all of the negativity that is in society, the negativity that's in our families. And it's, you know, we can take ourselves so far, but this book can take us a whole lot farther.

[Speaker 11] (1:05:32 - 1:05:39)

Well, thank you, Bill. Bill, thank you. Thank you.

I'm glad you were around when I was talking about the book.

[Speaker 3] (1:05:39 - 1:06:06)

I got to tell you something. You are, I don't know where you came from, and I did read in the book that you were studying a, you never, you know, said what kind of a career you were on in the book. You just said that you were studying for a lucrative career and you, you got off the beaten path and went into the spiritual realm.

I've got to tell you something, my friend, we need more people like you.

[Speaker 2] (1:06:07 - 1:06:25)

Bill, I thank you very much for that. Thank you so much. Thank you.

Where were you? What were you doing? That's a good point that Bill brings up.

What were you doing before? The last week you said that your thing was, you never thought you were so cute. No.

But that you had, that you thought, that you thought that you had such a great intellectual mind.

[Speaker 1] (1:06:25 - 1:07:30)

Yes. So what were you doing? I was an intellectual.

I got into university fairly late because I left school at 13 or 14. And then later, when I was 18, I went to live in England. And then I took, suddenly became interested in intellectual things.

I was searching. I was becoming already more and more unhappy. And I thought all the answers would be found on the intellectual level.

So what were you planning on doing? Not being a spiritual teacher, obviously. No,

becoming a professor.

And then have all the answers to life. And then after a while, I realized they don't have the answers. Wow.

And I became more and more depressed and unhappy. And then suddenly something snapped inside. And this disidentification from my mind happened.

Yes. Which happened to our friend, Bill, while he was reading the book. Because when somebody reads the book and has such a powerful response, that means the reading of the book coincides with his own awakening as he reads.

But this happens because he was so ready for it.

[Speaker 2] (1:07:30 - 1:07:30)

Because he was ready.

[Speaker 1] (1:07:30 - 1:07:34)

Ready for it. It's wonderful to see when that happens. When that happens.

[Speaker 2] (1:07:34 - 1:08:12)

But, okay, we were talking earlier about the ego loves complaining. First of all, loves to believe, loves to identify with the thoughts in the head and believe those thoughts. And loves to complain.

But aren't there some things legitimately worth complaining about? You know, anybody who's ever gone into a house construction at some point or another is told a story by the construction workers, unless you have the most amazing, you know, that this is going to be finished at a certain time or it's going to be a certain price and then it often doesn't turn out to be what you expected. That's a complaint a lot of people have.

Isn't that legitimate?

[Speaker 1] (1:08:13 - 1:08:13)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:08:13 - 1:08:16)

Like you talk in the book about, my soup is cold.

[Speaker 1] (1:08:17 - 1:08:18)

Yes, in a restaurant.

[Speaker 2] (1:08:18 - 1:08:21)

Yeah, in a restaurant. My soup is cold. Sometimes your soup is cold.

[Speaker 1] (1:08:21 - 1:08:22)

That's right.

[Speaker 2] (1:08:22 - 1:08:22)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:08:22 - 1:08:34)

So, first of all, the complaining that we are talking about mainly here, the egoic complaining, most of that fulfills no real purpose because it's not meant to bring about change in any situation.

[Speaker 2] (1:08:34 - 1:08:37)

Okay, that's complaining and resentment complaining.

[Speaker 1] (1:08:37 - 1:09:53)

Yes. And a lot of it for many people happens only in the head. Sometimes they verbalize it also.

But a lot of the complaining happens in the head alone. But no matter whether they verbalize it or whether the complaining happens in the head alone, in probably 90% of cases, it has no real purpose because it's not meant to bring about change. It's meant to strengthen the ego.

I see that. And then, of course, there are situations, of course, where something needs to be said in order to bring about change in the situation. And that's a completely different kind of complaining where you say something so that change can happen.

For example, the cold soup in the restaurant. You say, the soup is cold. Please bring me hot soup.

That's fine. You could call that also complaining. And there are also two ways of, as far as this kind of complaining is concerned, that is connected to a real situation that is meant to bring about change.

There's one way of complaining with ego in that situation also. And that is when the ego is attempting to make somebody wrong. A personal element comes into it and there's a negativity that flows into it.

[Speaker 2] (1:09:53 - 1:09:56)

To make somebody wrong because my soup is cold.

[Speaker 1] (1:09:56 - 1:10:45)

Yes. Damn it. That's right.

You're personalizing it. And so you're making another person almost, one could say, into an enemy when you complain in that way. So whether it's somebody who is a builder, who is working on your home.

And so there is a way of complaining. I wouldn't even perhaps call it complaining. Of simply stating what the situation is.

Stating the facts. Yes. Without the negativity that flows into it when the ego does it.

And so that can be practiced. And whatever you are stating in order to bring about change is actually going to be much more effective if it's done without the negativity. Because if it comes with negativity, it provokes a negative reaction in the other.

And so the whole situation then becomes a conflict situation.

[Speaker 2] (1:10:45 - 1:11:09)

As you say, see if you can catch. That is to say, notice the voice in the head. Perhaps I'm on page 64 everybody.

Second paragraph. Perhaps in the very moment it complains about something. Recognize it for what it is.

The voice of the ego. And then later you say, the moment you become aware of the ego in you. This is mid-paragraph.

It's strictly speaking no longer the ego but just an old conditioned mind pattern.

[Speaker 1] (1:11:09 - 1:11:30)

Yes, because ego means you're not aware of it. So ego means unconsciousness. So a good thing that people can ask themselves when they become aware of this complaining voice in the head.

Or the verbalized complaining voice. Is this meant to bring about change in the situation? And if they look at it clearly, often they will say no.

[Speaker 2] (1:11:30 - 1:11:36)

No, it's just hearing myself complain. Because it keeps fueling my sense of righteousness

and rightness.

[Speaker 1] (1:11:36 - 1:11:44)

And what the complaining voice also loves is to get confirmation from somebody else. That yes, you're right to complain. So then two people join.

[Speaker 2] (1:11:44 - 1:11:46)

Oh yeah, and then you just fuel it.

[Speaker 1] (1:11:46 - 1:11:48)

On and on and on and on.

[Speaker 2] (1:11:48 - 1:11:48)

I love it.

[Speaker 1] (1:11:48 - 1:11:49)

That's right.

[Speaker 2] (1:11:49 - 1:11:54)

Doris is Skyping us from outside of London, England. Doris, what's your question? Hello.

[Speaker 7] (1:11:55 - 1:12:26)

Hi, Oprah. Hi, Eckhart. What an amazing day or evening.

The book resonated very deeply within me, I must say. And reading on page 62, the first paragraph, resentment is the emotion that goes with complaining. It started a question within me.

And I thought like, but where do hurt feelings belong to? Is this something that my ego tells me to feel? Or where do they come from, Eckhart?

[Speaker 1] (1:12:27 - 1:12:34)

Can you give a situation, an actual situation? It's always easier to talk about this when you can look at an actual situation.

[Speaker 7] (1:12:34 - 1:12:57)

Well, hurt feelings can have, most of the time, some outside. Either way, somebody is telling you something that hurts you personally. But what about sadness?

You know, you lose a person or, you know, hurt feelings come from many different

sources. Where do they come from? How do they relate to the ego?

[Speaker 1] (1:12:57 - 1:12:58)

Thank you. Okay.

[Speaker 7] (1:12:58 - 1:12:59)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (1:12:59 - 1:13:35)

So often it happens that even, let's say, somebody criticizes you and you feel hurt because perhaps you were attached to what you were doing and you feel hurt. Now, what is it in you that feels hurt? And yes, it is the ego that feels hurt.

And so when that happens, all you do is, first of all, you can't say, Oh, I shouldn't be feeling hurt and I shouldn't have an ego. It doesn't work. You simply accept that this is what you are feeling right now.

And you recognize what it is in you that is producing.

[Speaker 13] (1:13:35 - 1:13:37)

Ah, okay. Just take it in.

[Speaker 1] (1:13:37 - 1:14:21)

It's a mental image of yourself that has become hurt. Because most people think of themselves as good people. And if somebody says you're no good, immediately something feeds.

And many people get extremely angry. They're not only hurt. For many people, that immediately turns into anger.

And so the ego wants to immediately defend itself in driving in traffic. Often, let's say, you're driving and another driver suddenly calls you idiot. That hurts.

On one level, it hurts. It hurts the ego. And usually, immediately, the ego goes into self-repair mode, as I call it, and will shout something back in order to repair itself.

[Speaker 2] (1:14:24 - 1:14:39)

I'm laughing at you because, I mean, I'm thinking if somebody calls me an idiot. Somebody gave me the finger once and I was like, gee, that gave me the finger. But I don't remember being hurt about it.

I was so stunned by it.

[Speaker 1] (1:14:40 - 1:14:45)

But many people would be hurt. But you were not because you were...

[Speaker 2] (1:14:45 - 1:14:47)

I thought, what a bad day he's having.

[Speaker 1] (1:14:47 - 1:14:54)

Yes, you were in touch with a deeper level of yourself where nothing is hurt. You can't be hurt on that level.

[Speaker 2] (1:14:54 - 1:15:04)

When I used to take taxis all the time, when I'd have a taxi driver in a really bad mood, if he was in a horrible mood, I would tip him double extra so that he'd be nicer for the next person.

[Speaker 1] (1:15:05 - 1:15:06)

Really.

[Speaker 2] (1:15:07 - 1:15:07)

That's a good one.

[Speaker 1] (1:15:08 - 1:15:44)

There's even a story about an official in Japan, a high government official went to see a Zen master. And he asked the Zen master, can you explain to me what the self is? Self really means ego.

Because they talk about the self in Buddhism. Can you explain to me what the self is? And the Zen master said, what a stupid question is that?

Why are you asking such stupid questions? And immediately the government official said, how dare you talk to me like that? Don't you know who I am?

And the master said, that's the ego. That's the ego.

[Speaker 2] (1:15:44 - 1:15:45)

All right.

[Speaker 1] (1:15:45 - 1:15:53)

Got it. Now this person got hurt, but in him, immediately the hurt turned into anger.

[Speaker 2] (1:15:53 - 1:15:56)

So any time you have hurt feelings, that is your ego?

[Speaker 1] (1:15:56 - 1:15:57)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:15:57 - 1:16:38)

Okay. Now you say here also, Doris, on page 65 he says, a long-standing resentment is called a grievance. To carry a grievance is to be in a permanent state of against.

And that is why grievances constitute a significant part of many people's ego. Collective grievances can survive for centuries in the psyche of a nation, we know that, or tribe, and fuel a never-ending cycle of violence. And so I guess all of us need to ask, what are the grievances that we allow ourselves to carry?

Yes. Family grievances. Families.

That carry on and you don't even forget why you're carrying the grievance.

[Speaker 1] (1:16:38 - 1:16:47)

Yes. Personal grievances. Family grievances.

Grievances between tribes, religious groups, nations, and so on. Dreadful.

[Speaker 2] (1:16:47 - 1:16:55)

And so are you saying no grievance has a justification? That all grievances are based as the core of the ego?

[Speaker 1] (1:16:56 - 1:17:05)

It's an essential part of the ego to hold grievances. The ego keeps itself alive. That's one of the ways in which the ego keeps itself alive.

[Speaker 2] (1:17:05 - 1:17:36)

You also say on page 66 here, Doris, don't try to let go of the grievance. Trying to let go to forgive does not work. Forgiveness happens naturally when you see that it has no purpose other than to strengthen a false sense of yourself.

Forgiveness happens when you realize that being resentful is only to build up your ego. But that resentment is only helping you carry around this false sense of who you are. I got that.

[Speaker 10] (1:17:36 - 1:17:44)

I got that. You got that, Doris? Yes, I got it too.

Yes, thank you very much. You got it too. Good.

All the way in London.

[Speaker 2] (1:17:44 - 1:17:54)

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you.

We have Tim, a retired Air Force officer who lives in Sicily on the line. Hi, Tim. Your question?

[Speaker 6] (1:17:55 - 1:17:56)

Hello, Oprah. How are you doing?

[Speaker 2] (1:17:56 - 1:17:58)

Good. Good to talk to you.

[Speaker 6] (1:17:58 - 1:18:04)

Hey, good to talk to you. Thank you for this opportunity. It's a real honor to be talking to you and Eckhart.

[Speaker 2] (1:18:05 - 1:18:06)

Okay, your question?

[Speaker 6] (1:18:06 - 1:19:04)

I want to put this in context first. I'm jumping ahead to page 74 where Eckhart mentions that sometimes you need to protect yourself against the deeply unconscious. So in that context, my question is, in the case of war, if I protect myself and others via violence, I seem to be part of the insanity that he talks about.

But to surrender our lives to any unconscious mass of people seems to push us closer to extinction. And I guess my question is, are my defensive actions bringing humankind closer to or further away from a collective enlightenment? And then as a follow-up, I would just ask, is it possible personally, can I fight a war and stay in the present, keep that space between my ego and my true self?

[Speaker 2] (1:19:04 - 1:19:08)

Those are brilliant questions. Thoughtful.

[Speaker 1] (1:19:08 - 1:19:09)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:19:09 - 1:19:11)

Thank you so much. Thank you.

[Speaker 12] (1:19:11 - 1:19:13)

Thanks, Tim, for asking. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:19:13 - 1:21:47)

I have personally known people and read accounts of people who actually experienced an awakening in the midst of the turmoil of a war situation, when death was imminent, could happen at any second, and something within them suddenly disidentified. The ego broke down in the midst of the suffering generated by that situation. The ego collapsed.

As it also has happened to people even in concentration camps and prison camps. I regularly get letters from people in prison who tell me that they have suddenly become free. They are still in prison, but they consider themselves free.

So we are talking perhaps here not only about war, but any kind of situation that usually would be described as extremely negative and unconscious. Is it possible to awaken there? Yes, it happens.

I'd say that every human being has a spiritual teacher. For most humans, their spiritual teacher is their suffering. And a war situation is an extreme form of suffering.

And ultimately, whatever happens here will lead us to awakening, even something that looks on the surface very negative, like a war situation. Eventually, even that will lead us into an awakening. And it's already happening.

So, yes, it is possible in the midst of war to suddenly awaken. What will happen then, I cannot foretell. It depends on whatever the situation is.

It is also true to say that once you have awakened, it is very unlikely that you will still become part of violence. I'm not saying it could not happen. Nothing can be said categorically.

But you no longer resonate with violence. Now, so that if war will no longer happen, when a certain number of people have, I don't know what the critical mass is, a certain number of people have entered the awakened state, so they no longer generate the unconsciousness, the negativity that produces war, that's perhaps...

[Speaker 2] (1:21:47 - 1:21:48)

That's where we're evolving to.

[Speaker 1] (1:21:48 - 1:21:49)

We're evolving to that.

[Speaker 2] (1:21:49 - 1:21:52)

We haven't done so good in the 20th century, nor 21st.

[Speaker 1] (1:21:52 - 1:22:30)

No, the 20th century was dreadful, the most dreadful, almost as if the ego had reached a climax there, the madness of it. And we can see a lot of that still flowing now into the 21st century also, but at the same time something is happening in this century that is quite unprecedented. Well, it started in the later part of the last century.

This awakening is quite unprecedented. If you look, for example, at previous war situations, there was very little...

[Speaker 2] (1:22:31 - 1:22:32)

Challenges to it.

[Speaker 1] (1:22:32 - 1:22:38)

Yes. It was never challenged by the people. That's right.

And now this is very different. Right.

[Speaker 2] (1:22:38 - 1:22:57)

You actually say in Chapter 4, you talk about how the hippie movement in the United States brought about a shift in consciousness. The movement itself started to fall apart, but the hippies actually brought a challenge to the status quo as we knew it. The hippies said...

[Speaker 1] (1:22:57 - 1:23:07)

Yes. Also, it was a disidentification from the collective image. Right.

The collective, which up to that point, people had very strongly identified with the collective.

[Speaker 2] (1:23:07 - 1:23:31)

Behaved a certain way, did things as they were told, obeyed the status quo. Yes. All right.

You say ego takes everything personally, back to what Doris was saying earlier. Ego takes everything personally. Emotion arises, defensiveness, perhaps even aggression.

Are you defending the truth? No, the truth in any case needs no defense. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:23:32 - 1:24:04)

So when people argue, usually an argument, often arguments turn into violence. If people are very unconscious, and many of you still are, arguments turn into violence. So when people argue about something, usually what happens is they are so identified with their opinion...

Of being right. Yes, being right, their mental position, that any questioning of their mental position, of their opinion or their viewpoint, is regarded as an attack on them.

[Speaker 2] (1:24:05 - 1:24:05)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:24:05 - 1:24:09)

And this is how the ego gets confused with who you are.

[Speaker 2] (1:24:09 - 1:25:19)

You know, I will tell you a funny story. I was reading this book, and Stedman and I were at dinner, just the two of us, talking about what are the most important questions in life. And I said, I believe one of the most important questions in life is to know whether...

It's just to know, to believe whether the universe is compassionate or not compassionate. And he said, well, I disagree with you. I think the most important thing is whether or not you know how to work on your strengths.

And I go, well, that's ridiculous, because the most important thing is do you believe whether the universe is compassionate or not? And so we're arguing about whether or not the universe is compassionate or not compassionate, and he didn't agree with my view. And I said, well, you know, I know I'm right.

I ended up clearing the table, leaving the table, and going upstairs, because I don't want to have the conversation anymore. And, you know, half an hour passes. He comes up, and he says, OK, you're right.

You're right. And I go, never mind, I don't need to be right. I don't need to be right.

And then I realized that, yes, that is exactly what happened. My ego is arguing because it is defending its right to be right.

[Speaker 1] (1:25:19 - 1:25:26)

Yes. Yeah. Identification with a mental position, with a concept in the head, can happen so easily.

[Speaker 2] (1:25:26 - 1:25:55)

Right. And we're talking about compassionate issues. Yes.

Or non-compassionate issues. Yes. Yeah.

Well, my friend, Kadada Jones, who I was at her father's 75th birthday party the other night. Quincy Jones turned 75, everybody. And Kadada was there, his daughter.

And we started talking about A New Earth, and she had so many questions that I said, Kadada, why don't you just Skype us on Monday? And here you are. Hello, Kadada.

[Speaker 4] (1:25:56 - 1:25:58)

Hi, Eckhart. Hi, Oprah. How are you?

[Speaker 2] (1:25:58 - 1:25:58)

Hi.

[Speaker 4] (1:25:59 - 1:26:24)

And your question? OK, my question is, this book hits me really, really deep in my heart. And I know it to be the truth.

But I have such resistance. And I feel like if everything in form is an illusion, it feels really disenchanting. And I'm at a point in my life where I have goals.

I'm excited about my career. I want to have kids. I want to meet a great partner.

And if it's all illusion, where's the fun?

[Speaker 1] (1:26:27 - 1:27:43)

Not my ego. You are not meant to believe that all is illusion. At a stage in your life where you can simply enjoy the play of form, eventually you will come to a point, as every human does, where the forms in your life are no longer completely satisfying.

They leave a certain emptiness. They leave a frustration. But you haven't reached that point yet.

That's fine. In the meantime, you enjoy your life. Be as present as you can, which means don't project yourself continuously into some future moment that promises you more

and greater fulfillment.

But if that happens and you can't help it, that's fine too. But why not enjoy this moment as it is, really? That's all you can do.

This is not to take the joy out of life. It's to really deepen the way in which you live rather than living on the surface of things and expecting fulfillment through relatively superficial things, going deeper to a place where true joy resides.

[Speaker 2] (1:27:44 - 1:27:57)

I know. I think that's a good question, though, that you raised, Kadada, especially I've heard this from a lot of people your age who say, so now where is ambition? Ambition is ambition my ego?

Good question.

[Speaker 4] (1:27:57 - 1:28:15)

You want to hit career strides. You want to see things happen. You're excited to meet somebody.

You're going to have a baby that you're going to be madly in love with. And then I hear Eckhart's voice, and I have to remember my ego, remember that it's form, and it just kind of makes me feel a little unexcited. But I guess it's about being in the moment.

[Speaker 1] (1:28:16 - 1:29:21)

No, there comes a point when you can see the truth of this very clearly in your own life. Until you can see the truth of it very clearly in your own life, the book remains on the conceptual level. And so I wouldn't say that there's anything in the book that you should believe in.

If the book works for you, the truth of it is immediately recognized, like in Bill, who we talked to earlier, the truth of it is immediately recognized. There's a sense of, ah, yes. But at 20, I would not have understood the truth in this book.

I had ambitions. I wanted to become a great professor. I wanted to be seen as to be successful.

I wanted to show to the world that I can make it. So I was working hard. If at that point I had read this book, I would have said the same as you.

I don't want this right now. I don't need this. The book really, as long as you feel that you don't really need it, it's fine.

You should carry on with what you're doing.

[Speaker 2] (1:29:21 - 1:29:22)

I don't even hear her saying she doesn't need it.

[Speaker 4] (1:29:22 - 1:29:53)

I totally need it. I totally know that this book is real and true. And I'm actually turning 34 in a week.

So it's really, really, really important for me to figure out how to integrate consciousness into this next chapter. I want to approach it in a very conscious way. But there's still probably a little part of me, a lot of part of me, that's gripping on to the form.

I live in Los Angeles. I'm in a business where form is at the forefront. It's kind of a hard balance.

I'm just wondering how do you reap the fruits and not identify to the form?

[Speaker 1] (1:29:54 - 1:30:30)

Yes, forms. You can enjoy the forms, and you can really only truly enjoy the forms if you're not completely identified with the forms. Because if you're completely identified with the forms, there's always an element of fear that the form might leave you, the situation that you have, whatever, the form might leave you, or suddenly the form will no longer be satisfying.

So the attachment to the form doesn't really mean that you enjoy it. The attachment to the form produces negativity and produces fear around it, around your life situation.

[Speaker 2] (1:30:30 - 1:30:43)

It's doing, Kadada, what I said, I think, on an earlier class. It's like, especially in Los Angeles, you know, great fun city, City of the Angels there, it's like being able to be in the world but not of it.

[Speaker 1] (1:30:44 - 1:30:45)

Yes, yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:30:45 - 1:30:47)

To be in the world but not of it.

[Speaker 1] (1:30:47 - 1:31:17)

Yes, and a lot of that, the attachment, is less likely to be there the more present you are with any life experience, the more present you are in the moment, then you're not

attached. The attachment needs future, needs more looks to the future, either as a threat or hope. So be as present as you can in every situation in your life, in every moment in your life.

[Speaker 2] (1:31:17 - 1:31:30)

Yes, and what you were talking about, I think, in one of the future chapters about being able to be present with your children instead of just sort of going through the motions with your children, being present with your children. Hey, Kadada, great to see you on Skype.

[Speaker 4] (1:31:30 - 1:31:31)

Thank you for having me.

[Speaker 2] (1:31:33 - 1:31:43)

Let's go to our study group who's watching our webcast at Borders on Michigan Avenue in Chicago. Hi, everybody. Hi.

I hear Jamie is there and has a question.

[Speaker 9] (1:31:44 - 1:32:00)

Yes, hi, Oprah, hi, Eckhart. My name is Jamie. My question is, on page 83, you mention how fame especially is such a downfall for the ego, and I'm just wondering, Oprah, how you manage to keep everything so grounded?

[Speaker 1] (1:32:01 - 1:32:04)

I've been meaning to ask you that too. Really?

[Speaker 2] (1:32:06 - 1:32:40)

Oh, thanks for bringing that up, Jamie. How do I manage to keep everything so grounded? I can think, I believe that I'm not attached to the fame.

I don't know that to be true since I have been, quote, famous for most of my adult life, but I believe that I really am, that what I do comes from such a, you know, I consider myself blessed, and I'm blessed because I have acquired fame and attention and money by being myself.

[Speaker 1] (1:32:40 - 1:32:43)

That's it. You don't play roles.

[Speaker 2] (1:32:43 - 1:32:47)

Yeah, I don't have to be anybody other than myself, and so...

[Speaker 1] (1:32:47 - 1:33:13)

And that's very rare. On television, almost everybody is playing a role. And your success is due to the fact that you are yourself.

Right. You're the same person outside television as you are here in the studio, and really that can apply to anybody. The more you are truly yourself and not playing roles, the more powerful you are.

The ego tells you you need to play some role, but your true power lies in not playing a role.

[Speaker 2] (1:33:13 - 1:34:34)

I will say this. When I first started television, I was a news reporter and never was satisfied. I always felt that I was exploiting people.

My whole day was based around finding the worst story possible to report. And also, I was an anchorwoman, and something would happen, Jamie, when the light would come on, like on this camera, there's a little red light on, and all of a sudden, I'd be, like, talking like I am now, and the light would come on, and I would suddenly go into my newswoman anchor voice and play the role of the newswoman anchor person that I thought I was supposed to be. And one night, I was reading some copy that I hadn't pre-read, and I was naming a lot of countries, and Canada was on the list, and I called Canada Kanata.

And I started cracking myself up, then I said, did I just call Canada Kanata? And that was the breakthrough moment for me on television. That was the breakthrough moment where I was able, for just a few seconds, break through the wall of my facade as an anchorwoman who knows all of the different countries and in Kanata.

And that moment was such a funny moment for me, I couldn't stop laughing, and started the process of me being able to be myself on the air, that first little glimpse of it. So, did you have a question for Eckhart?

[Speaker 9] (1:34:36 - 1:35:00)

With all, you know, this webcast and being on Oprah, obviously you've come into incredible fame, and I didn't ask you the question, because this has been what you've been preaching since, you know, since you wrote *The Power of Now*, but do you anticipate, are you just completely self-actualized, you don't expect this to be a problem, or how do you expect fame to come in into play for you at all now?

[Speaker 2] (1:35:01 - 1:36:25)

Yeah. No, this is so funny. Amy Gross, who's the editor of O Magazine, who's also a pretty centered person, we were talking about, Eckhart did an article for us from a conversation that we had earlier in O Magazine and on my issue, and so we were talking about Eckhart coming for the first session a couple weeks ago.

She says, won't we all be surprised if Eckhart comes in in a fur hat and three pounds of bling, wearing sunglasses with an entourage? If Eckhart walks in and goes, yo, yo, what's up? No, I don't think it's affected him because this is so funny.

When I first called Eckhart months ago, months and months, I don't even know how long ago it was, to tell Eckhart that I was going to be choosing A New Earth as our book club selection, I think it's our 61st selection or whatever, he was very, he was so calm about it. Later, one of the producers says, well, did you call him, did you call him? And I said, yeah, I called him.

And she said, well, was he excited? And I said, I think for him that was excitement. As I said, I'm choosing the book.

He goes, yes, very good. So anyway, I don't think it's gone to his head yet. And listen, so far, no bling.

[Speaker 1] (1:36:26 - 1:36:32)

When it happens, then you'll know the ego has come back. Let me know. I will.

Because I won't know it if it's come back.

[Speaker 2] (1:36:32 - 1:37:15)

When Eckhart comes in wearing two earrings, I'll let you know. Okay. Let's see, thank you so much, Jamie.

And all the group from Borders, thank you for being there every week. Yay Borders! Michigan Avenue!

Let's see some of the email questions you've been sending during our class on our computer screen here. This is Melissa from Crab Orchard, West Virginia. She says she's being awakened with worry.

My sister's addicted to drugs. She's been through rehab to no avail every day. We worry about her.

We fear she may die if she continues. My question is this. How can we live awakened with this major, major distraction in our lives?

That's good.

[Speaker 1] (1:37:16 - 1:40:10)

Well, the first thing, you need to take responsibility for your own life and your own state of consciousness rather than thinking your primary responsibility is your sister's life and your sister's state of consciousness. That's not the case. You have to start with yourself.

Change can only begin with yourself. So are you taking responsibility for your own state of consciousness rather than believing unconsciously that of course you're worried and there's nothing else you can do. You have to look at what you call the worry in yourself, the continuous mind activity that dwells on negativity.

See if you can enter that state of acceptance or presence and just be with yourself. I recommend to get out of the mind, go into the body several times a day, and connect with the feeling of aliveness within. For yourself.

So that the worry, the worry pretends. Worry is part of the ego. It's the compulsion to think and it serves no purpose because it doesn't get you anywhere.

It's similar to the complaining. It has no useful purpose. It doesn't bring about change in any situation.

No matter how much you worry, it's never the worry that brings about any change in the situation. The mind may tell you you need to worry because it has some purpose. It doesn't.

So the essential thing is that you get out of that unconscious habit of continuous worrying. So find a little bit of peace in yourself first to start with, and it may be more than a little bit of peace, but start with a little. Is there any peace in you underneath this continuous mental noise that we call worry?

Is there anything else in you? And you have to find that you can only be of true service to your sister, you can only truly be an agent for change in this world if something has changed in your state of consciousness. Otherwise you contribute to the turmoil.

So find through meditating, through bringing awareness to the present moment as much as possible, through bringing awareness into the inner body as much as possible. Get out of the mind and enter presence and realize the mind may tell you you're not helping your sister. This is the beginning where you may be able to truly be of help to somebody else.

[Speaker 2] (1:40:11 - 1:40:13)

Because the only thing you can do is really help yourself.

[Speaker 1] (1:40:13 - 1:40:13)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:40:14 - 1:40:17)

That's right. But the mind tells you, I have to save my sister.

[Speaker 1] (1:40:17 - 1:40:18)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:40:18 - 1:40:22)

And what you're saying is that is not necessarily true.

[Speaker 1] (1:40:22 - 1:41:32)

No. Ultimately your sister is also responsible. It doesn't mean that one human being cannot help another.

But what is essential when we ask whether you can be of help or not to another human being is is there something in you that can bring about change in the consciousness of another human being. Unless some change has happened inside you, it can't happen. But this may talk more generally about worry.

This is the problem for many, many people. They wake up in the middle of the night worrying. During the day they go about worrying about this or that.

What does it mean to worry? What does it mean? It means there is unconscious mind movement projecting itself usually into the future and you see how dreadful the future is going to be, what's going to happen.

You see outcomes that are negative. Many things, of course, are never going to happen. But worry pretends to be necessary.

You have to see very clearly.

[Speaker 2] (1:41:32 - 1:41:34)

Worry pretends to be necessary.

[Speaker 1] (1:41:34 - 1:41:38)

Oh, I got that. You have to see that it serves no useful purpose.

[Speaker 2] (1:41:38 - 1:41:42)

Yeah, worry pretends to be necessary but serves no useful purpose.

[Speaker 1] (1:41:43 - 1:41:51)

And so once you see that it serves no useful purpose, you can sometimes maybe be able to step out of that and see, oh, and then become present.

[Speaker 2] (1:41:51 - 1:42:05)

Yeah, you can become present. If you can step out of the worry for a moment, you can become present enough to say, what can I do now? How can I be now in this moment?

[Speaker 1] (1:42:05 - 1:42:05)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:42:05 - 1:42:08)

For myself, for my sister, for whatever it is you need. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:42:08 - 1:42:56)

And the greatest gift you can give to somebody, especially somebody who is suffering like your sister, when you are with them, what is your state of consciousness? Are you able to bring presence when you connect with your sister or any other human being that you want to help? Can you be present with them?

Can you give them space to be? That's the healing. Healing.

You can be an agent for healing of another. Not in the sense that I am going to heal you, not believing. Right.

That would be ego gain. I'm going to heal you. No, simply be there as a conscious space of presence, not wanting to do anything, just being there as a conscious presence with another person.

[Speaker 2] (1:42:56 - 1:42:57)

That's very hard for people.

[Speaker 1] (1:42:57 - 1:42:57)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:42:57 - 1:42:59)

I understand it's very hard for people.

[Speaker 1] (1:42:59 - 1:43:02)

And that's why we call it the shift. It's a shift. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:43:02 - 1:43:30)

I recognize how hard it is. I'm reading this book now from a guest who is coming on the show called Beautiful Boy. You might have heard of it.

It's the story of the father. The father and the son both wrote a book together. It's going to be on the Oprah show later.

His son was an addict for many years. Very difficult for parents especially, and as in this case, Melissa, a sister, to a drug addict to stand by and watch somebody daily attempt to kill themselves through drugs. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:43:30 - 1:43:40)

Okay. But acceptance is also an important part of that. It's at the moment you need to accept.

Stop resisting it. Yes. Stop resisting it.

Not bringing the resistance always into the relationship.

[Speaker 2] (1:43:41 - 1:43:44)

Because whatever you fight, you strengthen, and what you resist persists.

[Speaker 1] (1:43:45 - 1:43:45)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:43:45 - 1:43:47)

That's at the top of page 75.

[Speaker 1] (1:43:48 - 1:43:48)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:43:48 - 1:43:53)

Whatever you fight, you strengthen, and what you resist persists. Why is that?

[Speaker 1] (1:43:53 - 1:44:14)

Because that's how the... By opposing, you bring... This world works in terms of polarities, so if you strengthen one polarity, you immediately strengthen the other.

That's an exact... Physics, yes. Exactly the same.

Physics.

[Speaker 2] (1:44:14 - 1:44:40)

Yes. Okay. You say, because these days you frequently hear the expression, the war against this or that, and whenever you hear that, you know that it's condemned to failure.

There's the war against drugs, against crime, the war against terrorism, against cancer, against poverty, and so on. And despite the war against all of these things, every one of those things is bigger than ever. That's right.

That's right. Because what you fight, you strengthen, and what you resist persists. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:44:41 - 1:45:00)

And then the implication, of course, is there is another way of dealing with things, with situations. And that is to make peace with it. Make peace with it.

And then action, take action. The action then comes out of a different state of consciousness. The action comes out of presence.

Presence. It's no longer reaction.

[Speaker 2] (1:45:01 - 1:45:06)

Yeah. It comes out of presence and not out of you being defensive about it. That's right.

I got it.

[Speaker 1] (1:45:06 - 1:45:12)

And the action is much more powerful and effective when it's not defensive and not negative.

[Speaker 2] (1:45:12 - 1:45:18)

We have Dana from Monrovia, Liberia. Oh. On the phone.

Hello?

[Speaker 8] (1:45:21 - 1:45:22)

Hello, Oprah. Hello, Eckhart.

[Speaker 2] (1:45:22 - 1:45:28)

Hello. It's Dana. Hi.

It's Dana. Hi, Dana. How are you?

Oh, we're happy to talk to Monrovia.

[Speaker 8] (1:45:28 - 1:45:57)

Hello. Oh, thank you. Your question.

Can I go ahead? Yeah, go ahead. My question has to do with non-reaction in relationships.

Would it be the same to say that the opposite of love is not hate, but rather indifference, considering if one makes that situation not a personal one?

[Speaker 1] (1:45:59 - 1:46:04)

Okay. That's your question. Yes.

I don't fully understand the question. Thank you.

[Speaker 10] (1:46:05 - 1:46:07)

Don't leave, Dana. Reading.

[Speaker 8] (1:46:10 - 1:46:13)

Go ahead. Concerning non-reaction.

[Speaker 12] (1:46:14 - 1:46:14)

Yes.

[Speaker 8] (1:46:15 - 1:46:22)

Would it be the same to say that the opposite of love is not hate, but rather indifference?

[Speaker 1] (1:46:24 - 1:46:27)

Now, do you mean that non-reaction is indifference?

[Speaker 8] (1:46:30 - 1:46:38)

Correct. That's what I'm asking. Oh, okay.

Particularly if one doesn't take it in a negative context.

[Speaker 12] (1:46:38 - 1:46:38)

Okay.

[Speaker 8] (1:46:40 - 1:46:43)

Meaning not letting negative consume one person.

[Speaker 1] (1:46:43 - 1:48:40)

Okay. Well, non-reaction means that you recognize when another human being displays some form of ego behavior, wants to be right or wants you to be wrong, or accuses you of this or that, whatever. Many kinds.

The ego manifests in many different ways. You recognize that that is its ego, and you don't react to it, which means you don't confuse this behavior with who that human being is. It means you allow the ego to be there without fighting that behavior.

For example, I had a—it happened some years ago, but it's an interesting example. I had a plumber come in to do some repair at my place, and he was extremely aggressive and rude. The plumber?

The plumber. And I treated him as if he were a noble guest, very polite and explained what needs to be done, because I recognized that perhaps he had been trapped in this pattern for years. Maybe it started with childhood when everybody around him was rude to him.

So there was a deep-seated pattern of rudeness and unpleasant behavior and of regarding other people as enemies. And I didn't react because I recognized that as a dysfunction in him that it wasn't him at all. So I simply accepted his behavior and pointed out this needs to be done.

After 20 minutes, he was changed completely. He suddenly said, Oh, thank you. For the first time, perhaps— Somebody was nice to him.

Somebody was nice because everybody else reacted to him in the same way that he acted. He got the reaction. And this is how most human beings encounter their daily reality.

[Speaker 2] (1:48:40 - 1:48:42)

It's a cab driver situation.

[Speaker 1] (1:48:42 - 1:48:48)

And for most people, their daily reality is really a reflection of their own predominant inner state.

[Speaker 2] (1:48:49 - 1:49:14)

And so the enlightened part of ourselves, after reading this book, being awakened, we

realize what you're saying here in Chapter 3, Cord the Ego. You should be able to recognize the ego not only in yourself, but see it in other people. Other people.

So when you see that kind of reaction from someone, you realize it's their ego. Yes. It's not them.

[Speaker 1] (1:49:14 - 1:49:19)

That's right. So one could almost say it's like an illness.

[Speaker 2] (1:49:19 - 1:49:26)

It's like a mental— So the presence in you then gets to respond to, relate to the presence in them.

[Speaker 1] (1:49:27 - 1:49:27)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:49:27 - 1:49:30)

Oh, you've got to be really highly involved to do that.

[Speaker 1] (1:49:30 - 1:49:35)

It's not indifference, by the way. This is not indifference. No, that's— You're not indifferent.

[Speaker 11] (1:49:35 - 1:49:36)

That's compassionate.

[Speaker 1] (1:49:36 - 1:49:37)

Compassion.

[Speaker 11] (1:49:37 - 1:49:37)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:49:37 - 1:49:39)

Yes. Understood.

[Speaker 2] (1:49:41 - 1:49:44)

In fact— Yes, thank you for that clarity. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:49:44 - 1:49:44)

Okay.

[Speaker 2] (1:49:44 - 1:49:45)

Thank you. Thank you, Donna.

[Speaker 1] (1:49:45 - 1:49:50)

Now, the question is, you say you need to be highly involved.

[Speaker 2] (1:49:51 - 1:49:54)

Well— Yes. Because most people just react.

[Speaker 1] (1:49:54 - 1:50:25)

It is true to say that, at first, the reaction is so automatic when somebody behaves unconsciously to react in the same way. It's very automatic. Now, as people begin to become more aware of their egos, usually after it's happened, they become aware that they reacted in the old ego way after the event.

Then, after a while, in the middle of reacting to somebody's ego, you suddenly become aware that that's what you're doing.

[Speaker 2] (1:50:25 - 1:51:33)

Somebody just told me this last night, and this happens a lot with the airlines, where, you know, my goodness, if you can get from point A to point B on commercial airlines these days without losing your luggage or flights being canceled or sitting on the tarmac or whatever, and they were reading the book, and in the midst of, you know, schedule for the flight— I'm sure this has happened to many of you— schedule for the flight, everything's fine, you get there, and there's no seat. There's no seat. And other people didn't have their seats, and people around them were just imploding, and this person said that they decided to remain calm, as my godson, as a matter of fact, and people all around them were going nuts.

And suddenly, out of nowhere, after about a half an hour— not out of nowhere, about a half an hour— the person behind the counter called the names, and of all the names they called, they called his, who had been sitting there calm. Now, they didn't know him from anybody else, but, you know, it eventually worked out. I'm not saying that it always works out, but he realized after reading the book that it makes no sense to get crazy.

[Speaker 1] (1:51:33 - 1:51:43)

Yes, it's not only that, but also it's true that things are much more likely to work out when you are in a harmonious state of consciousness and not in resistance.

[Speaker 2] (1:51:43 - 1:52:19)

Which brings us to page 77. Do you want peace or drama? You say, we all want peace.

There's no one who doesn't want peace, yet there's something else in you that wants the drama, wants the conflict. And whenever you're moving in the drama, you can, as we all can, I think, now, a little bit, anyway, detach from the thought, see yourself having the thought, recognize that you, the you, the I of I am, is the awareness that you're having the thought. When you can see all the drama, just detach a little bit, you've done what?

[Speaker 1] (1:52:20 - 1:52:37)

That's the vital thing, to see it in the midst of it, to suddenly become aware that this is an old pattern in you, an ego pattern in you. It may not even stop immediately, but at least suddenly there is a witnessing presence in the background.

[Speaker 2] (1:52:37 - 1:52:43)

That the ego wants to complain, the ego wants to be resentful, the ego wants drama.

[Speaker 1] (1:52:43 - 1:53:19)

Yes, and to see that in oneself, one could call it almost, there is in humans something that we could call the addiction to unhappiness. When you are unhappy, for whatever reason, once you are trapped in that energy of unhappiness, you don't want to get out. That's right, because your ego loves it.

Yes, so there is an addiction to the, actually on some level you enjoy your unhappiness, and when you can become aware of that, then suddenly you're stepping out.

[Speaker 2] (1:53:19 - 1:54:00)

So let's talk about the power of awareness. You talk about on page 78, a power comes into your life that is far greater than the ego, greater than the mind. All that is required to become free of the ego is to be aware of it, since awareness and ego are incompatible.

This is page 78, first paragraph. Awareness is the power that is concealed within the present moment. This is why we may also call it presence.

And the ultimate purpose of human existence, which is to say, your purpose, is to bring that power or that presence into this world. Yes. That is why we're here.

[Speaker 1] (1:54:00 - 1:54:30)

Yes, that is the universal, the impulse, the universal impulse is the evolution of consciousness. That is the impulse behind the universe. The universe is moving towards

the evolution of consciousness.

And we are one manifestation of the evolution of consciousness into this world. We're one. Yes, there are many others.

Right. Even a plant is a manifestation of that already.

[Speaker 2] (1:54:30 - 1:55:06)

Right, right, right. But our ultimate purpose of human existence is to bring that presence, that awareness, into the world and to become more aware in our daily lives so that, regardless of what you're doing in your form world, in your form life, that you recognize, as you say on page 79, can I sense my essential beingness, the I am, in the background of my life at all times? Yes.

To be more accurate, can I sense the I am that I am at this moment?

[Speaker 1] (1:55:07 - 1:55:27)

Yes. And an easy step towards that is the inner acceptance of this moment as it is without wanting it to be different or rejecting it or resisting it. If you can accept, if you can see that the primary thing in your life is the present moment because there is never anything else.

[Speaker 13] (1:55:28 - 1:55:28)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:55:28 - 1:55:47)

It's always now. So you must see if you can have a good relationship with the now because if you don't have a good relationship with the now, you don't have a good relationship with life because life is now. Yes.

So accepting this moment as it is can connect you with that dimension of depth in yourself.

[Speaker 2] (1:55:47 - 1:55:52)

And that is how we begin to quieten or quiet the ego.

[Speaker 1] (1:55:52 - 1:55:53)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:55:53 - 1:55:56)

Is by being more fully present now.

[Speaker 1] (1:55:57 - 1:56:18)

That's the exit out of the ego, the now. The now is the hidden exit because the ego doesn't want you to know that that there is an exit and it's called now. The exit is the door out of the ego.

The now is the door. The exit. Yes.

The now is the exit door. Out of the ego. Okay.

[Speaker 2] (1:56:19 - 1:56:41)

And so whenever you find yourself complaining, whenever you find yourself, as we said last week, the need to feel superior, you feel superior or inferior to someone else, you know that it's your ego. Whenever you recognize that this is my ego and can bring yourself to the present moment of what is going on now and can see yourself doing it.

[Speaker 1] (1:56:41 - 1:56:41)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:56:42 - 1:56:43)

Yeah, that is awakening.

[Speaker 1] (1:56:43 - 1:56:44)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:56:44 - 1:56:50)

Okay. Ginger is a singer, songwriter, living in Berlin and is calling us via Skype. Hello?

[Speaker 5] (1:56:51 - 1:56:52)

Hi.

[Speaker 2] (1:56:52 - 1:56:54)

Berlin, Germany. Hello. Hello.

[Speaker 5] (1:56:54 - 1:56:56)

Hello. Schöne Grüße aus Berlin.

[Speaker 2] (1:56:58 - 1:57:00)

I guess that meant hello, right?

[Speaker 5] (1:57:02 - 1:57:03)

Yeah, exactly.

[Speaker 13] (1:57:03 - 1:57:03)

Okay.

[Speaker 5] (1:57:04 - 1:57:50)

Well, I feel like I am aware of the things that I do that are destructive and I can't seem to stop them anyway. I feel like I label things that are bad for me and then I resist them, like eating fried food or drinking too much or relationships. I resist them and I feel like it causes a source of anxiety and sometimes the huge decisions in my life come easily, but these little things, little decisions every day, they pile up and become a source of anxiety.

So my question is how can we get to this inspired action and effortless doing, not only when it comes to the big decisions, but when it comes to making healthy choices in our everyday lives?

[Speaker 2] (1:57:51 - 1:57:57)

Amen. Good question. Thank you, Ginger.

Yes. Yeah, because I was saying this to...

[Speaker 5] (1:57:57 - 1:57:59)

I know I'm doing it.

[Speaker 2] (1:57:59 - 1:58:20)

I just do it anyway. Yeah, why does it have to be a struggle just to do the right thing in terms of, you know, for me it's food always. It's always about food.

Yes. How can it become effortless? Isn't that your question, Ginger?

Yeah. And are you talking about, for me this would be about potato chips. What is this about for you?

[Speaker 5] (1:58:21 - 1:58:24)

For me it's red wine, French fries.

[Speaker 2] (1:58:25 - 1:58:28)

Okay. A little red wine every now and then.

[Speaker 5] (1:58:28 - 1:58:29)

And a few other things, of course, too.

[Speaker 1] (1:58:29 - 1:58:43)

Yeah. Okay. Go ahead.

So you mean when you eat French fries. And she knows that they're not so good for her. And then there's a voice in the head that says you shouldn't be eating them.

Nevertheless, you are eating them.

[Speaker 5] (1:58:44 - 1:58:46)

A tennis match is more like it.

[Speaker 1] (1:58:49 - 2:00:37)

A lot of eating, overeating, has a lot to do with the ego also because the ego lives in a constant state of not enough. It always seeks something else to fill itself with. And usually it experiences to identify with this or that.

Things. Things. But it's also the need for more, as I call it, that is built into the ego.

Sometimes it can get transferred to the body and then you experience it as the desire to eat much more than the body really wants. It's to take in more. So really to eat consciously really is the way out of it.

For example, I would suggest that when you eat your French fries, to make a meditation out of it and eat them consciously without having a secondary entity in your head that says you shouldn't be eating them. Eat them fully and consciously and at the same time feel how your body feels while you eat them and after you've eaten them. Then you bring some presence into it and you may realize in some cases that the body doesn't actually want to eat them.

It was the mind that wanted to eat the potato. So eat consciously. If you eat a sandwich, if you go to the fridge, sometimes people get up in the middle of the night, they open the door and you reach in and there's this need to get...

The body doesn't need it.

[Speaker 2] (2:00:37 - 2:00:38)

You're trying to feed something.

[Speaker 1] (2:00:39 - 2:00:40)

Feed something, yes.

[Speaker 5] (2:00:41 - 2:00:50)

For me it's also the anxiety that the resistance, not just for food but things that I label as bad for me, seem to cause a lot of anxiety.

[Speaker 2] (2:00:51 - 2:01:50)

What he's saying is stop resisting. Actually, after reading this book, I've been trying this lately, exactly what you said. And this is what you will find.

If you stop resisting it because the French fries are not bad, it's the thought in your head that has told you that the French fries are bad. And if you do what he's recommending, if you sit and you consciously make it a meditation, what you will find is you won't eat two bags of French fries unconsciously, that you will enjoy every single French fry. And in the enjoyment and the pleasure, if you stop when it's no longer pleasurable, it's no longer pleasurable after three or four or five.

By the time you've eaten a whole bag of them, you don't even taste it anymore. So he's saying make it a meditation. Be with it.

Feel it. Sense it. Allow your whole body to be with it.

Feel it. Sense it. And when you're done with the pleasure of it, let it go.

Yes. That is what you're saying, correct?

[Speaker 1] (2:01:50 - 2:01:50)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:01:51 - 2:01:52)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (2:01:52 - 2:01:52)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (2:01:52 - 2:01:59)

And that's with the red wine too. Yes. And other things as well, I suspect.

And other things as well.

[Speaker 1] (2:01:59 - 2:02:01)

Yes. Be with it.

[Speaker 2] (2:02:01 - 2:02:01)

Be with it.

[Speaker 1] (2:02:02 - 2:02:35)

When I was in my 20s, as young people do, I would often get drunk. Nowadays I still enjoy a glass of wine. Right.

You do. I enjoy it very much. Yes.

And I know after I've had one glass of wine, sometimes does my body want another glass of wine? And usually I cannot drink more than one glass. It's very rare that I would drink two glasses of wine because that's exactly the body says no more.

If you can sense your body, it will often tell you whether it's right or not to eat or drink something.

[Speaker 2] (2:02:35 - 2:02:56)

Well, that's a very good point that you just made. I just had an epiphany. Because you don't become overweight or even drunk or intoxicated as long as you are acting consciously.

It's when you become unconscious that you eat too much. Unconscious that you drink too much. Unconscious is when you become obsessively indulgent with things.

[Speaker 1] (2:02:57 - 2:02:59)

Yes. Yes. All these addictions are unconscious.

[Speaker 2] (2:02:59 - 2:03:07)

Are unconscious. Ginger from Berlin. Love that green you're wearing, girl.

That's fantastic. Thank you. Thank you.

Thanks for joining us.

[Speaker 1] (2:03:07 - 2:03:09)

Enjoy your fries.

[Speaker 2] (2:03:09 - 2:03:46)

Enjoy. Yeah. Have a glass of wine.

Consciously. Page 78, everybody. Bottom paragraph.

What is spiritual realization? The belief that you are spirit? You say no.

That is a thought. A little closer to the truth than the thought that believes you are who your birth certificate says you are, but still a thought. So, we're not spirit?

I thought we were spirit. What is the saying that we are spiritual beings having a human experience?

[Speaker 1] (2:03:46 - 2:03:47)

Yes, that's very good.

[Speaker 2] (2:03:47 - 2:03:49)

Yes, but we're not spirit.

[Speaker 1] (2:03:49 - 2:04:15)

No. That when we say we are spiritual beings having a human experience is not yet the realization that we are. It's the belief that we are.

Oh, okay. So, there is a step that goes from the belief. Belief is still a mental concept.

It's a little closer, as I say, to believing that you are what your birth certificate says you are. Yes. But it's not the realization.

No thought that you have about yourself is realization.

[Speaker 2] (2:04:15 - 2:04:34)

Okay, well, this is another thing. You know, a lot of people are still very conflicted about this spirituality and their religion. And what I hear you saying, feel you saying in this book is is that this book isn't about believing.

This book is about what you come to know for yourself.

[Speaker 1] (2:04:35 - 2:04:35)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:04:35 - 2:04:37)

Yeah, what you become to feel for yourself.

[Speaker 1] (2:04:37 - 2:04:38)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:04:38 - 2:05:03)

And that what you're saying is that God, in the essence of all consciousness, isn't something to believe. God is. Yes.

God is. And God is a feeling experience, not a believing experience. That's right.

And if your religion is a believing experience, if God for you is still about a belief, then it's not truly God.

[Speaker 1] (2:05:03 - 2:05:03)

No.

[Speaker 2] (2:05:03 - 2:05:04)

That's what you're saying.

[Speaker 1] (2:05:04 - 2:05:05)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:05:05 - 2:05:05)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (2:05:05 - 2:05:50)

At best, a belief is a transitional thing, that from there you go on to the realization that there is no separation between you and God, between you and the source of life, that you are one with the source. And you cannot realize that through believing. Believing, it's not a belief.

It's not a thought. Not a thought. It's a direct realization within yourself, and it's there in the gap between two thoughts.

That's right. And conceptually, you may not know anymore, you may not have an opinion of who you are anymore, and yet, at a very deep level, there's a knowing that cannot be put into words.

[Speaker 2] (2:05:51 - 2:06:24)

So, what is spiritual realization? The belief that you are spirit? No, that's a thought.

Closer to the truth than the thought that believes you are who you are, that your birth certificate says you are, but still a thought. Spiritual realization is to see clearly. On the bottom of page 78, everybody.

Spiritual realization is to see clearly that what I perceive, experience, think, or feel is ultimately not who I am. That I cannot find myself in all those things that continuously pass away.

[Speaker 1] (2:06:25 - 2:07:31)

Yes, so you are the space for all those things. You are the consciousness, the awareness, in which all those things, experiences, sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions, come, they appear. Jesus says, you are the light of the world.

That means you are the consciousness in which the world appears, is seen. And the consciousness itself has no form. It is formless, and it has nothing to do with time.

It's the dimension of the timeless in yourself. Eternity is the religious term for it. For most religious people, when they use eternity, it's a very abstract concept.

What eternity, what do I do with that? Or they believe it's continuous time that never ends. That would be extremely boring.

Eternity, there's no end to time, would become very boring. I wouldn't want things to go on forever in my life, to go on forever, ever, ever. But finding the timeless dimension is a very different thing in yourself.

[Speaker 2] (2:07:31 - 2:07:35)

Timelessness is very different than eternity, as you're saying.

[Speaker 1] (2:07:35 - 2:07:42)

The true meaning of eternity is timelessness. It's usually misinterpreted as meaning endless time.

[Speaker 2] (2:07:42 - 2:07:43)

On and on and on. I got that.

[Speaker 1] (2:07:43 - 2:08:10)

So there is in every human being, underneath all the stream of thinking and underneath the emotions, there is that dimension where timelessness or eternity dwells. That is the essence of who you are. That is consciousness itself.

You can know it by realizing that you are the space for whatever happens in your life. The space of consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (2:08:10 - 2:08:26)

Deep. I must say that's pretty deep there, Eckhart. We're on page 80, everybody.

One of my favorite quotes in the entire book, that actually I used in one of our ads in O Magazine, only the truth of who you are, if realized, will set you free.

[Speaker 1] (2:08:27 - 2:09:02)

Yes. Yes. Know who you are and you are free.

But to know who you are doesn't mean that suddenly you have an answer in your head. There's a stillness, and in that stillness, when you accept that you don't know who you are, as I say somewhere in the book, when you completely accept that you've realized all the things that you thought you were is not really who you are, and then you come to a point where you don't know who you are. And if you can fully accept that you don't know who you are, you're closer to who you are than you were ever before.

[Speaker 2] (2:09:02 - 2:09:40)

Once you realize and accept that all structures, page 81, forms are unstable, even the seemingly solid material ones, peace arises within you. This is because the recognition of the impermanence of all forms awakens you to the dimension of the formless within. That's what you're calling timelessness, that which is beyond death.

Jesus called it eternal life. Eternal life. So you believe what happens to us at death when the body dies?

You don't have a belief? I don't give it any thought. You don't?

No. Well, did you ever think about it at heart? No.

[Speaker 1] (2:09:41 - 2:10:56)

I know that the essence of who I am, which is the essence of who you are, is indestructible. I know that directly on a feeling level, and you can also know it even if you talk to a physicist. He will tell you that energy never gets destroyed.

It can only transform. So whatever it is that animates this physical form, at some point, whatever it is that animates this physical form is going to no longer animate this form, and that is when you see a dead body. And when you see a dead body, you see a year and a half ago both my parents died within the space of a few months, and I saw very clearly, each time I saw my mother's body lying there, a few months later I saw my father's body lying in the coffin, and I realized the form was still there, but the essence of that being was not present.

So the essence of that being was never the form. It was gone. It was no longer there.

And then when that which animates the form...

[Speaker 2] (2:10:56 - 2:11:03)

The essence of that being was never the form. The essence of that being inhabited the form, and now it no longer inhabited the form.

[Speaker 1] (2:11:03 - 2:11:09)

So you could see there was only a shell there. Right. And that was such a clear realization.

[Speaker 2] (2:11:09 - 2:11:13)

Many people who've seen their loved ones in the cast could see that.

[Speaker 1] (2:11:13 - 2:11:44)

Yes. So that which was the life within that form was always invisible. All you could ever see was the form.

Maybe you could sense the life within the form, but the life is always invisible, and the life ultimately has no form itself. And so you see, suddenly somebody dies. The essence is gone.

The life within the form is gone.

[Speaker 2] (2:11:45 - 2:12:28)

So what you're saying, again on page 79, is to be able to be in form and be able to sense the formlessness of yourself. Yes. To be in form and to sense that there is an essential beingness or formlessness, the I am in the background of our life at all times.

And that awareness, that formlessness, is what can hear, see, sense the thoughts that are going on all the time. And there's a little space, just a space, between the thoughts and the awareness of the thoughts. And that is where we, I, reside.

[Speaker 1] (2:12:29 - 2:12:45)

Yes. You are the awareness. You are consciousness, appearing as a person for a little while.

But in essence, you are consciousness, and consciousness is... As consciousness, you are timeless. You are eternal in the sense of timeless.

[Speaker 2] (2:12:46 - 2:12:53)

And when the form itself is lying there in the casket, that timeless formlessness has gone

where?

[Speaker 1] (2:12:56 - 2:13:05)

Transformed, either to join with the source or to go through further experiences of awakening.

[Speaker 2] (2:13:07 - 2:13:37)

In ways that our mind cannot even comprehend. No. Okay.

Before we say goodbye, I want to thank all of you around the world for making this remarkable experience possible. Eckhart and I will be here again next Monday at 8 p.m. Central. This third class will be available on demand tomorrow for free here at Oprah.com.

And if you want to download a podcast of any of our three classes, you can do that tomorrow at Oprah.com and iTunes. So what did you want to say in conclusion about the core of the ego?

[Speaker 1] (2:13:39 - 2:15:09)

The core of the ego. The ego, sometimes we look at it as if it were an entity. But really, it's just a form of unconsciousness.

It appears to be an entity sometimes. It is not threatening, never regarded as an enemy or something that you need to get rid of. It's only to be recognized for what it is.

And then the ego has fulfilled its purpose. It has taken you to that point of awakening. So in order to awaken, humans were in the state of oneness with the source when they first came here.

And then they lost themselves. They lost themselves in thinking. They lost themselves in the mind.

They lost themselves in the ego. And then they reached the stage where this state of being lost produces so much suffering that this dream of life becomes a nightmare and they start waking up in this stage that we have reached now. So as we wake up, we regain the state that we once had.

We lost the state of oneness with life. So we're waking up now. Oneness with the source.

But when we regain it, we regain it at a deeper level because we are conscious of it now. Wonderful. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (2:15:10 - 2:15:33)

Can't wait till next week because this week we're talking about all the things that form the core of the ego, how the ego loves to complain and it loves to be right and it loves drama and all of that. Next week we talk about role-playing, all the many faces of the ego, how so many of us believe that we are the roles that we play. That's next week.

Thanks, everybody.

[Speaker 10] (2:15:34 - 2:15:41)

Another night. Yay! LAUGHTER It's good.

It's good.